

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BELIZE 00392 230240Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00
INR-10 NSAE-00 DODE-00 /052 W
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R 211545Z APR 78
FM AMCONSUL BELIZE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6309

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E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, PINS, BH, CU
SUBJECT: CUBAN RUMORS

REF: BELIZE 359

1. BELIZE'S FAVORITE SUBJECT FOR RUMORS THIS WEEK SEEMS TO BE CUBANS. HOWEVER, WE CAN FEEL REASONABLY SAFE ABOUT FOLLOWING.
2. THERE WAS CUBAN DELEGATION IN BELIZE FOR ECLA REGIONAL CONFERENCE JUST CONCLUDED. DELEGATION WAS LARGE AND PARTICIPATED ACTIVELY IN CONFERENCE. WAS HEADED BY ONE (FNU) MELENDEZ (PHONETIC). MELENDEZ, SOMEWHAT TO SURPRISE OF BELIZEANS PRESENT, WAS ONE OF TWO DELEGATES STANDING IN RECEIVING LINE WITH PREMIER PRICE AT RECEPTION TUESDAY NIGHT.
3. BRITISH GOVERNOR MCENTEE SAID HE HAD MET MELENDEZ WHO HAD IMPRESSED HIM AS BRIGHT, RELAXED AND SUAVE. SEEMED ASSURED AND POISED. GOV. IS CERTAIN IT WAS MELENDEZ AND NOT GONZALES (REFTEL) WHO TRAVELLED WITH ATTNY GENERAL SHOMAN. OPPOSITION PRESS, AS GOV. SPECULATED, CARRIED STORY ON APRIL 17.

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4. SEVERAL BELIZEANS WE HAVE TALKED WITH, ALBEIT BRIEFLY, INDICATE CONCERN OVER CUBAN "PRESENCE" HERE. GUATEMLAN CONSUL GENERAL DEVELOPED ELABORATE CUBAN SCARE SCENARIO WHICH WE NOT INCLINED TAKE SERIOUSLY. HE WAS SUPPORTED BY HIS HONDURAN COLLEAGUE; BOTH SEEM TO BE RUNNING TRUE TO FORM.
5. MORE FANCIFUL RUMORS INCLUDE REPORTS OF CUBANS SEEN

LURKING IN CAYS OFFSHORE AND SIMILAR. WHATEVER ELSE MAY
MATERIALIZE, IT SEEMS CERTAIN CUBANS WILL CONTINUE BE MAJOR
SUBJECT FOR LOCAL CONVERSATION ESPECIALLY IN OPPOSITION
CIRCLES. OUR INITIAL ESTIMATE IS THAT MOST BELIZEANS HAVE
PRETTY STRONG RESERVATIONS ON THIS MATTER AND THAT PRICE
HAD BEST TREAD CAREFULLY.
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Message Attributes

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